

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 4 without prejudice to or waiver of the subject matter contained therein.

Please amend Claims 1,6, 7, and 13, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:
image forming means which forms an image on a recording material;
fixing means which fixes the image formed on the recording material; and
recording material conveying means which is provided at a downstream side of
said fixing means in a moving direction of the recording material, ~~the~~ said conveying means
including a first roller having a first shaft and a second roller having a second shaft and
maintained in contact with said first roller;

wherein said second roller includes a first portion provided in a vicinity of a
passing reference of the recording material and maintained in contact with said first roller, and a
second portion positioned farther from the reference than the first portion and having a diameter
smaller than that of the first portion[[.]],

wherein the first portion includes an elastic layer and a surface releasing layer
covering the elastic layer, and the second portion does not include a surface releasing layer
whereby an elastic layer is exposed.

2. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein
the second portion has a gap to said first roller.

3. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a difference in diameters of the second portion and the first portion is equal to or larger than 0.8 mm and equal to or smaller than 1.8 mm.

Claim 4 (Cancelled).

5. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, in case said image forming means forms the image only on one side of the recording material, said first roller is in contact with the image.

6. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first roller has a continuous shape without a division along ~~the~~ said first shaft, while said second roller has a shape divided into plural portions along said second shaft.

7. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first roller has a continuous shape without a division along ~~the~~ said first shaft, while said second roller has a continuous shape without a division ~~divided into plural portions~~ along said second shaft and becoming smaller in diameter as a distance from the reference increases.

8. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second portion is provided within a passing area of the recording material.

9. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first portion has a width, along said second shaft, equal to or larger than 1/3 of a passing area of the recording material.

10. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said conveying means is provided immediately behind said fixing means, in the moving direction of the recording material.

11. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said second shaft is provided, at an end portion thereof, with a gear for receiving a driving power from a drive source provided in said apparatus, and said first roller rotates following a rotation of said second roller.

12. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said apparatus is also capable of forming an image on a rear side of the recording material by reversing the recording material.

13. (Currently Amended) An image fixing apparatus comprising:
fixing means which fixes an image formed on a recording material; and
recording material conveying means which is provided at a downstream side of said fixing means in a moving direction of the recording material, ~~the~~ said conveying means

including a first roller having a first shaft and a second roller having a second shaft and maintained in contact with said first roller;

wherein said second roller includes a first portion provided in a vicinity of a passing reference of the recording material and maintained in contact with said first roller, and a second portion positioned farther from the reference than the first portion and having a diameter smaller than that of the first portion[.].

wherein the first portion includes an elastic layer and a surface releasing layer covering the elastic layer, and the second portion does not include a surface releasing layer whereby an elastic layer is exposed.

Please add Claims 14 and 15, as follows:

--14. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming means which forms an image on a recording material;

fixing means which fixes the image formed on the recording material; and

recording material conveying means which is provided at a downstream side of

said fixing means in a moving direction of the recording material, said conveying means

including a first roller having a first shaft and a second roller having a second shaft and

maintained in contact with said first roller,

wherein said second roller includes a first portion provided in a vicinity of a passing reference of the recording material and maintained in contact with said first roller, and a

second portion positioned farther from the reference than the first portion and having a diameter smaller than that of the first portion, and

wherein the first portion has a width, along said second shaft, equal to or larger than $1/3$ of a passing area of the recording material.

15. (New) An image fixing apparatus comprising:

fixing means which fixes an image formed on a recording material; and

recording material conveying means which is provided at a downstream side of said fixing means in a moving direction of the recording material, said conveying means including a first roller having a first shaft and a second roller having a second shaft and maintained in contact with said first roller,

wherein said second roller includes a first portion provided in a vicinity of a passing reference of the recording material and maintained in contact with said first roller, and a second portion positioned farther from the reference than the first portion and having a diameter smaller than that of the first portion, and

wherein the first portion has a width, along said second shaft equal to or larger than $1/3$ of a passing area of the recording material.--